SEP 1978

DDA submits as its first goal for consideration in FY'79 the identical goal that was submitted at the 2-3 June conference. On this occasion, however, we also present for consideration a recommended course of action. The goal is as follows:

> Develop a comprehensive information handling
> strategy for the Agency and a structure for more
> formal, continuing coordination of the Agency's ADP,
> communications, records management and word processing
> activities.

A more comprehensive explanation of the problem is found at Tab 1 and our recommended approach is found at Tab 2.

At this time, however, it is jointly granted by DD/M & the Comptroller

Information Management in CIA

The Executive Advisory Group has given considerable attention to the problem of managing the automatic data processing activities of CIA, recognizing the need for careful control over the growth of this expensive resource. It is becoming increasingly apparent, however, that to control ADP is to control only one element in a family of activities all of which involve the handling of information.

CIA collects, transmits, stores, retrieves, shares, collates, transforms, produces and publishes information in bewildering profusion. To facilitate these multiple processes we have developed highly sophisticated and costly communications and ADP systems, related in various ways to our printing and publication facilities and to the pervasive records management processes through which we identify and safeguard the information we need to accomplish our intelligence tasks.

These various information handling tools are highly interdependent. Computer data flows on communications lines; communicated messages come to rest in computer data banks; computerized records are converted to microfilm and microfiche; filmed and paper records are scanned electronically for communication to remote display terminals; word-processing techniques expand the computer data base or feed computerized text-editing and printing processes, etc., etc. A management program to control a single element in this family of activities will be frustrated by the

ways in which decisions made in another area can generate new, unpro-
grammed increases in workload. An awareness by the managers of the
larger information service components of the need for coordination has
protected us from major problems to date, but a new element is entering
the picture, threatening organizational loss of control.

The emerging, as yet ill-defined techniques of "word processing,"
are beginning to place in the hands of individual officers or units the
capacity to handle their information far more effectively and efficiently.
This new localized word processing power is accompanied, however, by the
ability to generate new and unanticipated demands on the central ADP and
communication systems, and it threatens to have dramatic impact on our
records management programs. The Information Systems Analysis Staff in
the O/DDA is attempting to measure the costs and benefits of these new
techniques, but is finding that without the ADP and communication factors
the analysis of word processing lacks significance. There are, to be
sure, "stand-alone" word processors, but the advantages of interconnec-
tion are enticing and easily obtained in today's market, and the use of
computer terminals as word processors (using software packages like
SCRIPT) has the potential for uncontrolled growth.

The new Office of Community Information Systems (OCIS) will apparently
be looking at some of these problems as they relate to the Intelligence
Community. CIA has no counterpart to OCIS, no single voice speaking
knowledgeably about the way information is or should be managed in the
Agency. Indeed, as is noted at budget defense time every year, CIA does
not even have one focal point for all its ADP effort. The Director of

2

Data Processing manages and can speak for only about half of the Agency's ADP resources.

One of the three DDA management goals for 1978, along with the search for greater effectiveness and proficiency, was the enhancement of information management. As we attempt to achieve this goal, we are continually reminded of the fact that in CIA the sharing of information and information-handling facilities makes a one-directorate approach to this problem ineffective. We need a mechanism to plan and coordinate our information-handling activities on an Agency-wide basis.

Tab 2

1. This recommended approach is submitted in concert with the Comptroller.

2. Additional thought and discussion has been given this matter since the goal was first submitted for consideration in June. That consideration has led to a series of both negative and positive conclusions. The negative conclusions are:

    a. The somewhat traditional and conventional Agency approach of appointing an inter-directorate staff study group reporting to EAG is insufficient for the cause.

    b. The magnitude of the problem, availability of qualified Agency personnel to study it full-time, and the need to capitalize on the best experience and technology available preclude an exclusive in-house attack. The presence of biases, subconscious or otherwise, amongst Agency personnel would inhibit the development of the most objective considerations to meet the problem.

The positive conclusions arrived at are:

    a. The problem is real, is here, and a failure to study and attack it now will only exacerbate a solution at a later date.

    b. The attack on the problem should not be undertaken unless we, in advance of a firm commitment, do something about it.

    c. The implementation to the solution to the problem may well involve a major, if not drastic, readjusted position of operating components in this Agency, with the most dramatic possibility being the creation of a new directorate. If we are not prepared to

accept and seriously discuss drastic remedies, we should not undertake the exercise.

d. A project director from the Agency, backed up by an Agency steering committee, should be appointed. The major study and formulation of recommendations, however, should be done by the best possible outside management or consulting firm that we can select. This firm should have a demonstrated record in attacking and successfully recommending solutions to some counterpart problems.

e. The study will not be inexpensive and should not be forced to meet an unreasonable time frame.

3. If all of the above stipulations are accepted, an initial implementing step, working within the constraints established above, would be to appoint the project manager and steering group to develop an operating plan of attack, to include a statement of the problem.